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can best work in the great cause of freedom to which we have all pledged ourselves.

Our Junior Red Cross will bring to you opportunities of service to your community and to other communities all over the world and guide your service with high and religious ideals. It will teach you how to save in order that suffering children elsewhere may have the chance to live.

It will teach you how to prepare some of the supplies which wounded soldiers and homeless families lack. It will send to you through the Red Cross bulletins the thrilling stories of relief and rescue. And, best of all, more perfectly

than through any of your other school lessons, you will learn, by doing those kind things under your teachers' direction, to be the future good citizens of this great country which we all love.

And I commend to all school teachers in the country the simple plan which the American Red Cross has worked out to provide for your co-operation, knowing as I do that school children will give their best service under the direct guidance and instruction of their teachers. Is not this perhaps the chance for which you have been looking to give your time and efforts in some measure to meet our national needs?

Woodrow Wilson, *President*

CHURCH EFFICIENCY

The Churches and National Religion

This subject is discussed in the *Constructive Quarterly*, June, by W. B. Selbie, M.A., D.D., principal of Mansfield College, Oxford. It is assumed that "the place and possibilities of religion in the life of nations" is among the very important problems raised by the present war. If the war reveals a sad deterioration of religious ideals it does not take by surprise those who knew the real religious conditions before the war came. The present religious status does not mean that Christianity has failed but that there must be a clearing away of much of former error and confusion. It must be understood that religion is a life and is not to be confounded with the externals in which it finds expression. The essence of religion is after all not in creeds, dogmas, and forms of worship. Religion must have room and scope for development. It is a living thing. Along with other things ecclesiastical history gives ample proof of the mischief that can follow from wrong relations between religion and the state. It is more readily seen now that there must be a more genuine expression of religion in the body politic. Religion as a national force has practically failed in the countries both with and without a national church. "No State establishment of religion is any guarantee that the State will be dominated by religion in all of its

actions." We have confused the function of the church in relation to the state. Long years of quiet and prosperity have made the sense of obligation to the community grow faint. The churches within the state are neither to rule it nor to be ruled by it. They do their work best by serving as a conscience in the community, and by standing for moral and spiritual ends, and keeping alive the sense of an ideal. The churches will have a great opportunity in the democracies of the future if only they can use it. Religion may be made quite a new and different thing in the life of nations. But the effectiveness of the churches is to be measured by the extent to which they are in the state but not of it. Hereafter spiritual considerations must be dominant. Never again can money, social prestige, numbers, and the like be depended on so much. There must also be freedom from all political connections. "Any Church which occupies the position of a mere chaplain to the State is likely to have its mouth pretty effectively closed."

Of the condition and work of the churches after the war no one can speak with certainty. Surely they will be faced with a unique opportunity. Then they will not be able to live on tradition, hearsay, or second-hand beliefs. Reality in religion will be demanded before everything else.

The evangelization of the lower races must go on, but not that they shall become valuable capital for the state. So, too, at home the highest welfare of all classes must be sought regardless of what they may mean as political or commercial assets. The aim must be to secure the opportunity for a richer and fuller life for all alike. The churches should be what the prophets were to Israel of old, viz., a living conscience and a mouthpiece of the will of God. They should be able to deliver their message with such earnestness and power as really to stir the conscience of the community and prepare the way for the reconstruction of the national life and policy on a more genuinely Christian basis. For the realization of this the churches must be free and they must be united. They must be free from all hindering alliances with the state, must shun attachment to political parties, must avoid any cash nexus with those whose aims and policies they may have to oppose. They must be one, not tentatively by the pressure of some outside need, but in reality, in spirit. Then the churches will "be able to represent the nation in its religious aspect, and to speak in its name."

Rural Ministers' Week

In recent years the country-life movement has been receiving much attention. A factor of primary interest and importance in the situation is the rural church. In this connection, the *Advance*, August 30, gives an account of an interesting new departure. Mention is made first of a convention of a Protestant denomination in Auburn, California. Although the most of the attending clergymen were serving country parishes there was not a suggestion of country life on the program. It was simply a good program of the traditional type. Soon after this every pastor of a rural church in California was invited to a Ministers' Week at the State Agricultural Farm at Davis. "The railroads gave free transportation to

every rural pastor in the State. The Pullman Company gave the free use of their cars en route and on a siding at Davis for the entire week. The state school fed them free and did everything to make country life more intelligent. Rural sanitation, domestic science, poultry raising, crop raising, plant protection, animal industry in health and in disease, were presented clearly, cleverly, and informatively, demonstratively." Certain wholesome results are already observable.

Church Federation and Social Service

As reported briefly in the *Northwestern Christian Advocate*, September 26, the federated churches of Cincinnati and vicinity are working together with the missionary and social agencies to organize a school for training social workers. In this federated council there are represented more than one hundred social agencies. The design of the new school is to provide training that will qualify workers for any of these agencies. This scheme enables the church to co-operate effectively without being compelled to handle the mass of routine incident to a purely social service work.

Time to Repair an Old Failure

The worst breakdown of church statesmanship has been in the field of social service, according to the *Continent*. For the actual doing of social service the church deserves more credit than it gets. But the social service which it has done has been for the most part the spontaneous flowering of its religious affections—a matter largely of the heart. New sentiments are prevalent, and to guide the church in taking advantage of these requires more than mere good instinct. Such tasks require brains also. The church's heart has functioned well in social religion, but the brains used have been sadly inadequate.

"American religious life for the last generation would have been markedly better for everybody concerned if at the first stirrings of the social movement in this country the church had had the wisdom to enlist immediately with it and shape its course." But instead, it frowned upon early social agitation in the United States, and the preaching of the new emphasis by radicals seemed to it to distort the message of Christ. That "Jesus preached a social gospel" was a discovery that led those who responded to the new emphasis to undervalue elements previously familiar. This overemphasis in some quarters tended to minify the place and the need for personal recognition. Naturally orthodoxy insisted that these new social views were fragmental and religiously insufficient. Yet in these views were great, fresh truths, and for the church to shut its mind against them was bad statesmanship.

Had there been sound statesmanship the church would have followed out three items of consistent policy:

First, the church would have laid immediate hold of the illuminating vision of the Lord which these then unique teachers were bringing to view and would have thanked God for the enrichment. Second, the church would have devoted intense study to purifying this "social message" from fanatical and abnormal emphasis and would have carefully worked out a sane basis on which the idea of "social salvation" might be incorporated with spiritual salvation. Third, the church would have gone to work with all determination to apply to current conditions in the world the social principles of Jesus as so discovered, verified, and brought into relation with the rest of Christian doctrine.

With such statesmanship the lamentable exodus of social workers from the church would have been prevented. Nearly all

social workers are the product of the church. In it they grew up and got their first incentives. It is their native and rightful home. Had this separation between typical social workers and the church been averted there would not now be so much of that cutting slur which insists that the church is indifferent to the poor. Furthermore, by this same statesmanship the church could have forestalled the bitter feud between evangelistic and social-service types in its ministry. There is no need of a dividing line here. That there is one is a reflection on the intelligence of the church. By the preaching of the gospel should men be called to personal repentance, and by the same means should they be called to their neighborly duty in business and community life. Good statesmanship would have also enabled the church to curb eccentric radicalism and the crudely materialistic ideas of society which have disfigured the development of sociological thought in this country. It cannot be denied that the voice of the church has been throttled by the stupidly earned reputation of standing for everything antiquated in the social organism.

But turning from these dismal "might have beens" the church can yet take its place. If it commits "itself unreservedly to the confession that there is in truth a social interpretation of the gospel of Jesus and that this puzzled age has a right to expect from Christian pulpits that social message included in 'the whole counsel of God,'" then "leadership will return to the head of the church like a crown." Instead of trembling in the presence of dangerous social dogmas it would then enter upon its right to frame the social dogmas of the age. The social and the evangelistic gospel combined are adequate to any human condition.